



Grades 4 and 8

NAEP 2009 in Your School

What is NAEP?

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), or The Nation's Report Card, is an essential measurement of student achievement in America.

- NAEP is a congressionally mandated project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education.
- NAEP is the only *nationally representative assessment* of what America's students know and can do in core subjects like mathematics, reading, science, and writing.
- The schools and students participating in NAEP represent other schools and students in their state and across the country.
- NAEP is considered the gold standard of assessments because of its impeccable technical quality. The assessment frameworks are developed with input from assessment specialists, education experts, teachers, and content specialists from around the nation.
- NAEP monitors student progress over time and reports on student achievement nationally. In some subjects and grades, results are also available for states and selected urban districts.

NAEP will be administered in your school between January 26 and March 6, 2009 to a sample of fourth- or eighth-grade students. Students will be assessed in either mathematics, reading, or science. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, all states are required to participate in reading and mathematics.

In a small number of schools, NAEP will conduct field tests in reading, mathematics, civics, geography, and U.S. history to prepare for future assessments, and special studies of hands-on science tasks and interactive computer tasks in science.

This fact sheet will help prepare your school and students for participation.

What is involved?

Students will spend about 90 minutes completing the assessment, including answering questions in one subject area and completing background questions. An additional 30 minutes of time will be necessary for students participating in the studies of hands-on science tasks and interactive computer tasks in science. The school principal and the teachers of the subjects being assessed will also complete a questionnaire. These questionnaires are designed to gather information about school characteristics, and the types of educational experiences that may be related to performance, such as amount of homework, reading habits and teacher experience.

Additional questionnaires will be completed by the teachers of selected students with disabilities (SD) and English language learners (ELL).

NAEP will administer a separate survey to American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN) students who are selected for NAEP and their teachers and school administrators. This survey, part of the National Indian Education Study (NIES), focuses on Indian education and the role of Indian culture in education. It is expected that about one-quarter of the schools selected for NAEP will have AI/AN students.

How many students are assessed?

Nationally, over 500,000 students at each grade will be assessed to represent the nation and their state. In most grade 4 schools, all eligible students will be assessed. In most grade 8 schools, the sample will be approximately 90-100 students. In states with fewer than 100 schools, additional students will be selected at each grade.

What are the responsibilities of the school staff?

A staff person in your school will need to be assigned to serve as the school coordinator. The school coordinator and the principal will work with the NAEP staff who are responsible for conducting the assessment.

What are the responsibilities of the NAEP State Coordinator and NAEP staff?

The NAEP State Coordinator works at your State Department of Education and will be responsible for:

- Working with schools to confirm the assessment date;
- Providing schools with instructions for preparing an electronic file of grade-eligible students (if required) and information about notifying parents of participating students;
- Responding to questions from the school community throughout the assessment period; and
- Providing schools with a copy of the NAEP state report as soon as it becomes available.

NAEP staff members are employed by an NCES contractor (not by your State Department of Education) to work directly with schools and will be responsible for:

- Selecting a random sample of students from the school list of grade-eligible students;
- Sending a Preassessment Packet of information to the school coordinator in early January;
- Visiting the school coordinator shortly after the Preassessment Packet is received to finalize assessment arrangements;
- Bringing all assessment materials to the school on the scheduled day; and
- Conducting the assessments.

What are the principal's and school coordinator's responsibilities?

Each principal will be responsible for:

- Assigning a school coordinator to serve as the primary contact for the NAEP assessment;
- Including the NAEP assessment date on the school calendar;
- Empowering the designated school coordinator to work with the NAEP staff and the NAEP State Coordinator to prepare for the assessment; and
- Informing school staff and students about NAEP and why student participation is critically important.

The school coordinator will be responsible for:

- Confirming with the NAEP State Coordinator that the suggested assessment date is convenient for the school.
- If requested, providing the NAEP State Coordinator with an electronic file of grade-eligible students; and
- Informing parents of the assessment. The NAEP State Coordinator will provide additional information about how this should be accomplished.

Before the assessment date, the school coordinator will be responsible for:

- Receiving the Preassessment Packet and beginning final preparations for the assessment;
- Meeting with the NAEP staff during the scheduled preassessment visit; and
- Ensuring that there is a plan with school staff to achieve high participation of students at the session.

Detailed information about the school coordinator's responsibilities will be sent in the fall.